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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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October 28, 2003

TO: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley   
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – LOVING LIFE  
GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Loving Life Group Home (Loving Life). Loving Life contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation Department. Loving Life is an eight-bed facility located in the Second Supervisorial District that provides care for males ages 13-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Loving Life was providing services for eight Los Angeles County Probation children.

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review was to verify that Loving Life was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues. The review included an evaluation of Loving Life's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with two children placed with Loving Life at the time of the monitoring visit. The interviews with the residents are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by Loving Life, and to ensure its adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

### **Summary of Findings**

While the residents appeared to be well cared for, we noted a number of areas where Loving Life was not in compliance with contract requirements. Loving Life needs to:

- make repairs to its facility;
- maintain current Needs and Services Plans for each resident and include the residents and their authorized representatives in the Plan's development;
- develop comprehensive Quarterly Reports;
- forward a copy of the Quarterly Report to each resident's authorized representative;
- properly maintain clothing allowance logs;
- provide residents fifty dollars a month in clothing allowance;
- allow age-appropriate residents to select their own clothing; and
- provide residents with a life book.

Attached is a detailed report of the monitoring findings.

### **Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management has agreed to provide DCFS with a written corrective action plan within fifteen business days of this report. We thank Loving Life's management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Patrick McMahon at (213) 974-0729.

JTM:PM:CC

Attachment

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee  
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS  
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer

**LOVING LIFE GROUP HOME**  
**700 S. Burris Ave.**  
**Compton CA 90220**  
**(310) 608-0150**  
**License No.: 191600185**  
**Rate Classification Level: 8**

**I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

*(Facility Based - No Sample)*

**Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Loving Life Group Home (GH) is located in a residential neighborhood of well-maintained homes. The exterior of the home was nicely maintained and blended in well with other homes on the street. There were no observable safety hazards noted.

Furnishings throughout the house were in very good condition and the kitchen was clean and neat. The bedrooms were clean, neat, and decorated by the residents. However, some areas needed improvement.

In bedroom number one, the mattress needed to be replaced and the dresser needed repair and, in bedroom number two, the door needed painting. In bedroom number three, one bed needed a box spring and the headboard was not attached to the bed. One of the beds in bedroom number four needed a new mattress and most of the residents' bed pillows needed washing.

All fixtures were in proper working condition in both resident bathrooms, however, the walls and surfaces needed cleaning and the toilet seats were worn.

There was age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment that included board games, a TV, DVD, Nintendo, VCR, and a weight bench with a variety of weights. According to staff all use of weights was done with staff supervision.

Loving Life maintained a variety of frozen meats, vegetables and dry goods, properly stored. Fresh snacks were available for residents.

**Recommendations**

1. **Loving Life management:**
  - a. **Replace the mattresses and box springs as needed in the residents' bedrooms.**

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- b. Repair/replace the dresser in bedroom number one.
- c. Paint the door in bedroom number two.
- d. Attach the headboard to the bed in bedroom number three.
- e. Clean the walls and surfaces in the residents' bathrooms.
- f. Replace the toilet seats in each resident bathroom.

## **II. PROGRAM SERVICES**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

### **Comments:**

Both residents met the population criteria as outlined in the program statement and each received a complete initial diagnostic assessment.

One resident's Needs and Service Plan (NSP) was realistic, measurable, and time specific. However, the resident and his placement worker did not participate in the development of the NSP. The other resident did not have a current NSP on file.

One resident's Quarterly Report was current, comprehensive, timely, and focused on the goals in the NSP. However, there was no documentation in the resident's file that a copy was forwarded to the Probation Officer. This was discussed with management during the exit conference who was unaware that the report was supposed to be sent. The other resident was not in need of a Quarterly Report at the time of the review.

Both residents were receiving individual, group, and anger management therapy. However the residents stated, and documentation reflected, that they were not receiving therapy sessions on a weekly basis as stated in the program statement.

### **Recommendations**

#### **2. Loving Life management:**

- a. Maintain current Needs and Services Plans for each resident.
- b. Include each resident and their authorized representative in the updating/modification of their Needs and Services Plan.

- c. **Develop comprehensive Quarterly Reports that focus on the goals of each resident's current Needs and Services Plan.**
- d. **Forward a copy of the Quarterly Report to each resident's authorized representative.**

### **III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Both residents were enrolled in school and their records contained semester report cards and/or progress reports. The residents reported that they were provided with a sufficient amount of educational stimulation away from school on a daily basis and that the staff was supportive of their academic progress.

Development of daily living skills was a part of the GH program. The residents were involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care was discussed as needed, and employment preparation encouraged.

Age-appropriate residents were offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

### **IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Loving Life follows a monthly activity schedule developed by the staff and with input from residents. Residents are encouraged to participate in activities they desire and have the opportunity to play table games, sports, and read at free times during the day.

Transportation is provided to and from activities.

**Recommendations**

There are no recommendations for this section.

**V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION****Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews:** There were eight residents placed in the agency at the time of the review. A review of case files was conducted for the eight residents on psychotropic medications.

**Comments:**

Loving Life maintains appropriate medication logs, current court authorizations and psychiatric evaluations for all residents on medication.

**Recommendations**

There are no recommendations for this section.

**VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS****Method of assessment – Resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews:** Two

**Comments:**

The residents were presented with the policies, rules and regulations when arriving in placement. Both residents stated that they felt safe in the home and that they were generally treated with respect.

They indicated that a sufficient number of staff was always in the home when residents were present and rated the physical facility as “good.”

Resident chores included the maintenance of their own rooms and common areas which the residents did not feel were too demanding.

Both residents were able to have telephone contact with their placement workers and phone calls and visits were permitted with sufficient privacy. The residents indicated that they could follow the religion of their choice or choose not to. The residents felt their health care needs were being met and that staff was culturally sensitive to each resident’s background and ethnicity.

Both residents were aware of their right to refuse medication.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

#### **Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

#### **Comments:**

The residents had appropriate clothing. However, monthly clothing expenditures were not properly documented in the log notes and the clothing logs did not reflect the date, amount received, amount spent, and a balance for each resident. One resident reported, and documentation reflected, that he only received forty dollars a month for clothing. The other resident was not aware of how much he received monthly for clothes. The residents also reported that they did not get to participate in the selection of their own clothes. This was discussed with management during the exit conference who confirmed that, overall, they did select the residents' clothing, but will now include the residents' in their clothing selections.

Residents are provided with at least the required minimum weekly allowance that they were able to increase based on the agency's behavioral system.

Loving Life provides residents with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

One resident did not have a life book.

### **Recommendations**

#### **3. Loving Life management:**

- a. Properly maintain clothing allowance logs to reflect that residents are receiving the required monthly clothing allowance.**
- b. Provide residents with fifty dollars a month clothing allowance.**
- c. Allow age-appropriate residents to select their own clothing.**
- d. Provide each resident with a life book.**